

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method [[of]] for managing subscriber billing in a telecommunication network, wherein each subscriber has billing accounts that are charged when services of the telecommunication network are used, the method comprising:

forming a subscriber billing group, the subscriber billing group comprising two or more subscriber billing accounts;

assigning to each subscriber of the subscriber billing group an identification associated with at least one type of access right; and

indicating on the basis of the access right, different rights to manage accounts of the subscriber billing group and to carry out predetermined procedures in or between the accounts of the subscriber billing group.

2. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a master subscriber has the right to access the billing group through the telecommunication network.

3. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the master subscriber carries out balance transfers between the billing accounts within the group.

4. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the billing account has a limited balance, and the master subscriber changes the balance limit or balance of the billing account.

5. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the billing account is a prepayment account and/or an account equipped with a credit limit.

6. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the credit limit is obtained from the balance of the master subscriber.

7. (Previously Presented) A system for managing billing accounts of several subscribers, wherein each subscriber has a billing account that is charged when services of a telecommunication network are used, the system comprising:

one or more subscriber billing groups, wherein each subscriber billing group comprising two or more subscriber billing accounts,

access right indicators, each indicating a specific right to manage accounts of the subscriber billing group and to carry out predetermined procedures in or between the accounts of the subscriber billing group,

an identification for each subscriber, wherein the identification is associated with at least one access right indicator; and

data processing means for carrying out the account managing and the predetermined procedures .

8. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 7, further comprising means for providing access for a master subscriber to the billing group through the telecommunication network.

9. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 7, wherein the account managing and the predetermined procedures comprise a balance transfer between the billing accounts within the group.

10. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 7, wherein the billing account has a limited balance, and the account managing and the predetermined procedures comprise changing the balance limit or balance of the billing account.

11. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 10, wherein the billing account is a prepayment account and/or an account equipped with a credit limit.

12. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 11, further comprising means for obtaining the credit limit from the balance of a master subscriber to the billing database.

13. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 8, wherein the master subscriber has access to a telecommunication service by making a facility call to a predetermined service number.

14. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 13, wherein a telecommunication server to which the master subscriber connects is an automatic answering apparatus.

15. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 8, wherein a telecommunication server to which the master subscriber connects is a World Wide Web (WWW) server.

16. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 8, wherein a telecommunication server to which the master subscriber connects is a Wireless Application Protocol (WAP) server.

17. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 8, wherein a telecommunication server to which the master subscriber connects is a short message centre or a short message server.

18. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising forming the subscriber billing group into a billing database.

19. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 18, wherein a master subscriber has the right to access the billing database through the telecommunication network.

20. (Currently Amended) A network element for managing billing accounts with respect to several subscribers configured to, the network element comprising:  
obtain information on at least one subscriber billing group, the billing group including comprising two or more subscriber billing accounts and, for each subscriber of said subscriber billing group, an identification associated with at least one type of access right to manage accounts, and

~~wherein the network element is configured to:~~  
~~use the identification to determine the access right of the subscriber among different access rights to manage accounts of the subscriber billing group and to carry out predetermined procedures in or between the accounts of the subscriber billing group.~~  
~~recognize a master subscriber that has the right to access the billing group; and~~  
~~allow the master subscriber to carry out predetermined procedures to the accounts of the subscriber billing group.~~

21. (New) A network element configured to obtain information on at least one subscriber billing group comprising two or more subscriber billing accounts and, for each subscriber of said subscriber billing group, an identification associated with at least one type of access right to manage accounts, use the identification to determine the access right of the subscriber among different access rights to manage accounts of the subscriber billing group and to carry out predetermined procedures, other than collecting billing information, in or between the accounts of the subscriber billing group.

22. (New) A computer readable medium having computer-executable components comprising forming a subscriber billing group comprising two or more subscriber billing accounts that are charged when services of the telecommunication network are used; assigning to each subscriber of said subscriber billing group an identification associated with at least one type of access right; and indicating on the basis of the access right different rights to manage accounts of the subscriber billing group and to carry out predetermined procedures in or between the accounts of the subscriber billing group.